

to them as reasonably clear. It appeared from this outline that Austria wishes a bill of particulars from the United States, proposes an exchange of opinion as to whether the Kaiser committed an "illegal and indefensible act," and expresses a willingness to discuss the facts.

It also appeared evident that Austria has not complied with a single one of the demands laid down by this Government; that is, she has not denounced the act, she has not expressed her willingness to punish the submarine commander committed an "illegal and indefensible act," and she has not consented to make reparations. These are the three demands which the United States made from Austria, and failure to comply with them, in the opinion of Washington officials, lead inevitably to a severing of diplomatic relations.

Although in American official circles there was no disposition to doubt the authenticity of the press reports purporting to give portions of the Austrian reply, there was a disposition to question this man diplomatic question in question this and to believe that the official text may prove less objectionable than the foregoing.

During the day the Austrian chargé d'affaires was twice in conference with Secretary Lansing. Although neither would disclose what took place at these interviews it is understood that Baron Ziwidnick informed the Secretary that he was without any information from Vienna, but desired to know what would be the probable stand of the United States if the official text of the reply bore out the press reports. It is believed that he was given practically to understand what lay forth above.

At the State Department little patience is shown toward the statement in the reply that Austria does not consider that she was officially notified of the position taken by the United States in the submarine controversy with Germany.

It was reiterated to-day that in despatching the note to Germany the Department followed the usual practice of sending copies of these communications to all diplomatic representatives accredited to this country, and that this practice always has been regarded as an official method of acquainting these diplomats with the position of the United States in diplomatic controversies. If the Austrian Embassy failed to send this information to the Austrian Government, it was pointed out, it was an unusual oversight.

On the other hand, considerable interest is manifested in official quarters in the statement sent to be in the Austrian reply that the Austrian Government does not consider itself bound by any precedents set up as a result of the argument between the United States and Germany. Anything short of approval by Austria of the principles finally recognized by Germany, officials here believe, will make it impossible for the United States and Austria to reach an agreement.

That President Wilson does not anticipate an immediate rupture in the relations between the two countries is indicated by the fact that he has made no move to postpone his winter trip or curtail it. He will discuss the whole situation with the Cabinet at to-morrow's meeting, and it is understood, will instruct Secretary Lansing in the evening of any sudden and unforeseen developments to notify him at once. If necessary, it is said the Secretary will go to the President to confer with him.

#### BERLIN APPLAUDS.

Austrian Answer to U. S. Generally Commended by Newspapers.

BERLIN, via London, Dec. 16.—The Vienna answer to the American note on the torpedoing of the Ancona receives general approval in the Berlin newspapers.

The Berliner Zeitung am Mittag says: "Vienna is willing to enter upon an exchange of ideas with Washington, but first wants details, resting on a firmer basis of fact than the rather vague information thus far received, which cannot be taken seriously. The Vienna answer is, therefore, nothing more than a serious question."

"The busy President Wilson will once more have to take the trouble to write a new and very learned note to fulfill Vienna's wish to be informed of the new learned man will also learn something on the side, namely, that diplomatic intercourse also has fixed rules which one cannot violate."

The Krent Zeitung says: "Count Buri's answer to President Wilson will be received everywhere with joy and satisfaction. The way in which a lesson is given the Washington Cabinet in the first essential of diplomatic setting is delicious, both in form and contents. The Vienna answer to Lansing went just a bit too far in their eagerness to arouse the voters to fever heat. From the facts in the case there can be no doubt in the least that the loss of lives on the Ancona."

"But what will Wilson and Lansing do now? The Anglo-American press is accustomed to hear unattractive answers come. Will they break off diplomatic relations?"

The outcome will be decidedly instructive as to what sort of intercourse is most to be recommended in intercourse with the Washington Cabinet."

The Lokal Anzeiger points out that the Austrian reply has a dignified disclaimer against the wholly unjustified sharpness of the American demands."

"President Wilson," it continues, "has considered it right to demand in the most brusque manner a compensation and self-punishment on the basis of statements of anonymous witnesses and on the basis of material which was so slightly convincing that the collector had to resort to it of effectiveness by indefinite expression, like 'reliable information,' or that the ship apparently did not attempt to escape."

"The Austrian note will bring President Wilson to a realization that in international relations it is not sufficient to make demands, but that the facts on which demands are based must be substantiated, and that missing proofs cannot be replaced by big, rude words."

#### LONDON EXPECTS BREAK.

Austria's Reply to U. S. Note Is Called Evasive and Insulting.

LONDON, Friday, Dec. 17.—The Austrian reply to the London newspapers both as an evasion of the issue raised by Washington and as a plain insult to American intelligence, more or less levelled in diplomatic phraseology.

"Austria's insolent reply to the United States," says the Daily Chronicle's headlines over the text of the answer.

The Daily News says: "The extraordinary insolence of the Austrian reply is veiled somewhat by its extremely bad composition, but its general tenor is clear, and there could scarcely be a more flat defiance of a peremptory demand."

"The full seriousness of the situation depends upon the degree in which Germany may be implicated. In view of the new developments the note certainly could not have been sent without Germany's approval."

An open rupture with Austria will definitely free the United States Government from even a seeming condonation of the submarine crimes, and will do much to restore to her prestige and authority among the nations, which she will need if she is to play adequately the part to which her greatness and destiny call her."

INFORMATION which has been received in official circles in Rome leads to the belief that the reports of a great drive by the combined Turkish and German forces on the Suez Canal are well founded. According to this information, the extension of the railway line from Constantinople to Damascus by the construction of a double tracked line from Damascus to the Egyptian frontier is being pushed rapidly. This line is said now to be completed to a point within fifty miles of the Sinai peninsula, to the east of the canal, and the completion of the entire railway is expected by February 1. The course of this railway is shown in the accompanying map, the dotted lines indicating the alternative routes across the desert which probably presented themselves to the German engineers. El Kantara, on the Suez Canal, is the point reached by the Turks in their disastrous attempt to reach the canal last winter.



## KAISER ABOUT TO LAUNCH BIG DRIVE AGAINST SUEZ

Army of 500,000 Reported Ready on Syrian Front for Dash to Egypt Along Railroad Which is Nearing Completion.

Rome, Dec. 16.—Military experts here believe that Germany is about to undertake a tremendous drive against the Suez Canal and Egypt. It is recalled that the German army leaders announced two months ago that the invasion of Serbia was the first blow in a campaign which would include an invasion of Egypt and a threat to India. There is no longer any doubt, however, that a Turkish-German army will shortly undertake the threatened drive for the Suez Canal.

The bulk of this army, under the command of Field Marshal von Goltz, the German rejuvenator of the Turkish army, is reported to be concentrated in Syria, principally in the regions of Damascus, Aleppo, and Hama. Its strength is estimated at close to 500,000 men, the bulk of the force being Ottoman, but the officers all German.

To facilitate the crossing of this desert, the chief task in the Turkish-German plan, Turkish and German engineers are exerting extraordinary efforts. By the 1st of February, it is learned, a double track railway, leading from Damascus to the Egyptian frontier and capable of unusual speed, will be completed. It will make possible the transportation of a huge army and all the supplies and ammunition needed.

Miles of tubes are being laid by the Germans to carry drinking water across the desert. Enormous quantities of material of all kinds, particularly such as machine guns, are being shipped to the Suez Canal, are constantly pouring in at the Syrian front.

The road from Berlin to Constantinople, it is thought, to be opened for the purpose of sending reinforcements to the Turks on Gallipoli Peninsula, is the most important factor for the transportation of men and material for the contemplated invasion of the land of the Nile.

General Pasha, the Turkish commander and statesman and former Minister of the Navy, heads the recently established Turkish department dealing with matters pertaining to Egypt and India. He is a bitter foe of the Allies, especially of Great Britain. He and von Goltz are the moving spirits in the preparations now on foot.

Meanwhile Germany and Turkey are doing everything in their power to feed the desire for material, but the facts on which demands are based must be substantiated, and that missing proofs cannot be replaced by big, rude words."

#### ASKS ABYSSINIA'S AID.

French Deputy Proposes Plan to Check German Move.

PARIS, Dec. 16.—Gratien Candace, a colored Deputy from Guadeloupe, has proposed to the Chamber of Deputies that the Allies obtain the immediate military cooperation of Abyssinia, under the guarantee of the country's independence. The proposal is aimed to prevent the success of German efforts

to bring about an Abyssinian attack on Egypt.

Arabs So Estimate—British Commander Sees They Lost 1,000.

LONDON, Dec. 16.—The Turkish attack on the British troops at Kut-el-Amara in Mesopotamia, on December 12 cost the Turks 2,000 men, according to Arab reports quoted in the evening of December 13. The General commanding the British forces. These reports have not been confirmed, but Gen. Townshend says that the Turks lost fully 1,000 men and that they have not renewed the attack.

The report of the British commander, as given out to-day by the press bureau, follows:

## DASH ON TRENCHES; KILL TO GERMANS

British Victorians in Two Surprise Attacks—French Use Same Tactics.

### YPRES UNDER FIRE AGAIN

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Dec. 16.—British troops entered the German trenches at two points near Arras last night and disposed of the occupants, according to a report from British Headquarters to-day. The German official statement tells of surprise attacks last night by the French on two posts on the southern bank of the Aisne, near Vailly.

Considerable artillery activity and much activity on the part of aviators on both sides are noted in the official statements. Ypres and the district between the Oise and the Aisne were the scenes of particularly heavy firing. French trench mortars blew up a German ammunition depot near Quenneville, between the Oise and the Aisne.

The British official statement denies the German official report of the loss of four British aeroplanes, and the German War Office says that the attack on Muehlheim, Baden, by allied airmen did no military damage. One civilian was killed and another injured.

The following official report from British Headquarters in France was issued to-night by the press bureau:

Last night two small enterprises were successfully carried out near Arras. Hostile trenches were entered and their occupants disposed of. The enemy losses are estimated at seventy killed. Our losses were trifling.

There were artillery bombardments on both sides about Ypres. The report sent by the German wireless on December 15 that we had lost four aeroplanes is untrue.

The official communiqué issued by the French War Office to-night follows:

There was cannonading on both sides in several sectors, in Belgium, in Artois and between the Somme and the Oise.

On the heights of the Aisne, to the southeast of Vailly, we satisfactorily carried out a coup-de-main against a group of houses held by the enemy, capturing fifty prisoners without sustaining any loss.

In the Argonne, in the region of Vauquois, the explosion of two of our mines destroyed some German trenches.

On the heights of the Meuse, in the Bois-des-Chevalliers, our batteries caused extensive damage to the enemy's works.

The afternoon French communiqué is as follows:

The activity of the enemy's artillery was less pronounced last night. Our batteries everywhere responded effectively, particularly between the Oise and the Aisne, where our trench guns blew up a German ammunition depot near Quenneville.

The German official report of to-day says:

Western Theatre of War.—There have been lively artillery actions and great activity on the part of aviators along the greater part of the front. Near the town of Arras, on the southern bank of the Aisne, we were unexpectedly attacked by the French during the night.

On December 15, a German aeroplane yesterday caused a British monoplane to fall over Valenciennes after an aerial battle.

The aim of the aeroplane attack on Michemont, near Valenciennes, was to destroy the railway establishment in that town. None of the bombs which the French dropped fell in the neighborhood of these buildings. One civilian was killed and another injured in the town. The purely military damage was limited to the destruction of one window pane in a hospital.

## ITALY REPULSES FOE ON THREE POSITIONS

Intense Artillery Fire Counter Attacked and Goritz Also Shelled.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

ROME, Dec. 16.—The Italian official statement issued to-day tells of the repulse of Austrian attacks on the Asiatic Valley and against Osavla and the Italian positions on the Carso plateau on the Isonzo front. The Italian artillery bombarded Goritz with great ferocity.

The official statement follows: "There was no infantry activity except frustrated attacks in the region west of Monte Covon, in the Asiatic Valley and also against Osavla and on the Carso plateau."

The enemy's artillery fire was intense. It was directed chiefly to long range bombardment of inhabited regions. Our artillery counter attacked that of the enemy and also very heavily bombarded Goritz.

An enemy aeroplane dropped bombs on Strigno, in the Sugana Valley, doing slight damage.

#### SURPRISE ITALIANS.

Austrians Report Capture of Position in Pizzo Basin.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

VIENNA, via Amsterdam and London, Dec. 16.—The Austrian War Office issued the following official statement to-day regarding the operations on the Italian front:

On the Tyrol and Isonzo fronts there was artillery firing. In the Pizzo Basin (on the Tarvis-Postojna front, above the headquarters of the Isonzo) we captured an Italian position by surprise.

#### KAISER BACK FROM LIBAU.

Visited Von Hindenburg and Will Stay in Capital for Some Time.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

AMSTERDAM, via London, Dec. 16.—Berlin dispatches say that the Kaiser has just returned from a visit to Field Marshal von Hindenburg at the latter's headquarters in northwest Prussia. The Emperor inspected the naval plants at Libau. He will remain in Berlin for some time.

Libau is an important Russian seaport in the Baltic. It was occupied by Field Marshal von Hindenburg's army in his drive along the Russian coast.

## GERMAN WAR PRISONERS LIVE ON ENGLAND'S BEST

Camp Comforts at Dorchester Include Steam and Shower Baths—Fare Is Generous, and Captives' Time Their Own—Jaillike Features Few.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Dec. 16.—One of the enviable roles in the war is that of a German military prisoner in Great Britain. The remarkable treatment which the Kaiser's soldiers receive after they have been captured by the British troops is one of the wonders of the war.

This was clearly demonstrated during a thorough investigation of a British camp for military prisoners which the correspondent of THE SUN was permitted to visit by special courtesy of the War Office.

The camp visited was at Dorchester, four hours by train from London, where there are at present almost 4,000 German soldiers, captured on the battlefields of Belgium and France, particularly about Loos.

Remarkable indeed is the manner in which these men are treated, and remarkable are the comforts they enjoy. These men live their own lives, do what they like, with their time and receive practically no orders from the handful of British officers in charge of the camp. These officers have adopted the system of leaving the entire discipline of the camp in the hands of the German non-commissioned officers.

Time Their Own.

There is absolutely nothing in the camp that is the use of the term "prisoners" beyond the strictly guarding the enclosure. No orders or restrictions whatever interfere with the daily life of these men. They live as they please and do as they will.

The British Government has them quartered in large, airy houses, well heated and equipped with every modern comfort. Shower baths, with hot and cold water, and steam baths are at their disposal daily and as often as they like. The British Government supplies to their personal comfort is omitted. The cooking is done by their own cooks. These cooks, who also are German prisoners captured at the front, receive compensation of six shillings a week from the British Government. All the other men performing work of any kind in the camp are paid for their work by the British Government.

There is little doubt that when they learn through the newspapers, which they are permitted to read daily without any restrictions whatever, that peace has been declared more than one of them will regret the war. They are well disposed with the hospitality of the British Government.

Not one German prisoner is employed on

work of any description beyond the actual clearing of the quarters without receiving weekly wages.

The freedom that is granted to these men was evidenced on all sides during my tour of the camp. The sergeant-mess was a Christmas tree prepared by the men. The prisoners have organized a band, with instruments generously supplied by the British. On these instruments they play daily their national anthem and other German tunes. All day long they have nothing to do but pass the time away in games or studies of their own choosing. While some are really engaged in serious studies others play cards, while those with artistic leanings paint or devote their time to wood carving.

The correspondent of THE SUN was permitted to inspect the great hall where the best of these prisoners infirmity from all parts of Germany and soldiers from German submarines and cruisers. Every one expressed satisfaction at the treatment he was receiving, and some intimated that they were glad to be away from the fighting line and to be living in such safe and comfortable quarters.

Prisoners Satisfied.

The correspondent had a long talk with Sergeant-Major Emil Hutter, who is warrant officer of the entire camp and was captured at La Bassée. The sergeant-major had no hesitation in saying that all the men were in the circumstances contented. Several told the correspondent that they were glad to be in England many months had gone by since they had received for their daily rations pure white bread and huge quantities of beef such as they were getting from the British Government.

But comfortable quarters and excellent food are not all in the happy lot of these prisoners. They are allowed to wear the fine appearing and well tailored brown corduroy suits, the warm flannel undersuits, the shirts, the socks, the shoes, the prisoners also receive a complete set of toilet articles, including hair brush, clothes brush, tooth brush and comb. There is little doubt that when they learn through the newspapers, which they are permitted to read daily without any restrictions whatever, that peace has been declared more than one of them will regret the war. They are well disposed with the hospitality of the British Government.

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SILVERWARE  
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## BRITAIN TO-DAY ISSUES NEW BOND PROSPECTUS

Investors Expected to Welcome Method of Buying American Securities.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Dec. 17 (Friday).—The prospectus of the issue of 5 per cent. five year exchequer bonds with which the Government plans to pay for American securities under the subscription plan will be issued to-day. It is expected that these new bonds will be very popular with investors and that they will affect unfavorably the prices of existing issues.

The issue of exchequer bonds is quite a surprise to the City. They are the best investment yet offered, and are rather a blow to consols and the existing war loans, which immediately fell on the Stock Exchange. The new issue will postpone the time of issue of another war loan at a higher interest rate into which the existing war loans will be convertible.

Without the Treasury decided upon this new issue in connection with its American securities scheme. The bonds are of course those for which American securities will shortly be accepted in exchange. Financial experts express the opinion that it would be a good idea for the Treasury, while preparing the issue of bonds in exchange for American securities, to offer them also for cash.

There was much favorable comment on the Government's freeing the bonds of the British income tax if held abroad.

Reginald McKenna, Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced in the House of Commons yesterday that the scope of the plan for the purchase of American securities will include South American securities which carry the right to be paid in the United States in United States currency.

The Morning Post suggests that the public might buy the 5 per cent. exchequer bonds, and intimates that the subscribers could pay for them in cash or approved American or Canadian securities. Thus, it is pointed out, the issue would obtain at a very profitable price, and the need of issuing a fresh war loan.

#### SELLS U. S. ISSUES.

Bank of England Offers Them at Rate of \$500,000 a Day.

The Bank of England is selling approximately \$500,000 of American securities a day, according to prominent bankers here who are in close touch with the situation both here and abroad. They pointed out that on this sale the Bank of England is being carried out without the aid of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's scheme.

Bankers here said that England is nearly bare of the American stocks of the war, and that she has disposed of them for a long time. They pointed out that the sale of American securities is a very profitable figure. About the only securities which are retained by any extent by big investors, banks and insurance companies are the most scarce of American securities. It is generally considered that it is to induce British institutions and investors to get rid of these last two classes of securities, which they would be the most likely to hold that Chancellor McKenna's scheme has been put forth.

Subscriptions to the \$500,000,000 British banking credit which was arranged here recently by the Vanderbilt committee are payable on Monday. The participation certificates are issued in denominations of \$5,000 each and banks purchasing these certificates are requested to specify in what name they should be issued.

Exchange on Berlin took another sharp drop yesterday, breaking below 76, the previous low figure at which they sold on Wednesday. Mark cables were quoted as low as 75 11/16 yesterday, while cables were sold at 75 3/4. The close of the market was 76 1/2 for the former and 76 3/4 for the latter. The previous close was 76 1/2 for cables and 76 3/4 for cables. Against a previous close of 76 1/2, the new low price of 75 3/4, as compared with a previous low close of 75 3/4.

Shilling exchange was stronger, advancing to 4 7/8, and demand and 4 7/8 for cables. It closed on Wednesday at 4 7/8, for the former, and 4 7/8 for the latter. Prices were also higher for gold, against a previous close of 5 5/8, and 5 5/8, respectively. Italian lire was unchanged at 6 5/8, while rubles rose from 31 to 31 1/2.

Day's British Loans 645.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Dec. 16.—The official British casualty list issued to-day contains the names of twelve officers, of whom one was killed, and of 632 men, of whom 272 were killed.

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HARPS \$75 to \$1,800. PIANOS \$150 to \$700. VIOLINS \$5 to \$500. VICTROLAS \$15 to \$850. VICTOR RECORDS 60c to \$7.00. MANDOLINS \$5 to \$150. GUITARS \$5 to \$175. BANJOS \$5 to \$90. HAWAIIAN UKULELES \$8 to \$25